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Committee for Programme and Coordination
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Agenda item 8
Adoption of the report of the Committee on its forty-fourth session

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Draft report

Addendum

Proposed strategic framework for the period 2006-2007

Part two: biennial programme plan

(Item 3(b))

Programme 23
Public information

1. At its 18th meeting, on 21 June 2004, the Committee for Programme and Coordination considered programme 23, Public information, of the proposed biennial programme plan (A/59/6 (Prog. 23)).

2. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced programme 23 and responded to queries raised during the Committee's consideration of the programme.

Discussion

3. The Committee welcomed the presentation of the programme narrative of programme 23. Appreciation was expressed for the efforts of the Department of Public Information. The Committee recognized the important role played by the United Nations information centres and encouraged the Department to continue their important work to fill the gap in the telecommunication area in their respective regions. Concerns were expressed about the growing use of digital texts as this could render printed texts obsolete. The Committee also encouraged the Department

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to continue the use of its radio broadcasts since that was still the means to reach a great majority of the people, particularly in the developing world.

4. The view was expressed that the expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement should be further enhanced, particularly with reference to the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005. The question was also raised of the equal treatment of the six official languages with a view to achieving multilingualism of the web site and United Nations documents.

5. Clarification was sought on the meaning of the terms "United Library Consortium" and "Major broadcasters". The Committee acknowledged the efforts and progress the Department had made in the field of modern media. However, the Committee expressed its concerns regarding the digital divide between the developed and developing worlds, particularly in Africa and many Latin American countries where the use of the Internet was not as widespread and the need to bridge that gap was of the utmost importance.

6. The following amendments were proposed to programme 23, Public information, of the proposed strategic framework for the period 2006-2007:

Overall orientation

Paragraph 23.1

At the end of the first sentence, after the words "the greatest public impact", add the words ", in particular by ensuring the full, equitable treatment of all the official languages of the United Nations in all activities of the Department of Public Information, and that the texts of all new public documents in all six official languages, and information materials of the United Nations, are made available through the United Nations web site daily and are accessible to Member States without delay".

In the second sentence, replace the words "information centres, information components, and regional information centres" with the words "information centres and services".

In the final sentence, replace the words "the Assembly and its subsidiary body" with the words "the Assembly, in particular the legislative mandates included in the present biennial programme plan, as well as those of its subsidiary body".

Paragraph 23.2

In the third sentence, the operative clause should read: "The Department of Public Information works closely with substantive client departments within the Secretariat and with other United Nations system partners, including through the United Nations Communications Group, to deliver effective and targeted information programmes on the aforementioned key areas within a common communications framework".

After the third sentence, add the following new sentence: "It endeavours to match its programmes with the needs of its audiences on the basis of improved feedback and evaluation mechanisms including its annual programme impact review".

At the end of paragraph, add the following new sentence: "The Dag Hammarskjöld Library, in close coordination with other United Nations libraries, including through its leadership of the Steering Committee for the Modernization and Integrated Management of United Nations Libraries and also through its own products and services, facilitates access to United Nations information".

New paragraph 23.3

After the existing paragraph 23.2, add the following paragraph and renumber subsequent paragraphs accordingly:

23.3 As cited in the penultimate operative paragraph of General Assembly resolution 58/101 B, particular attention will be paid to the full and equitable treatment of all the official languages of the United Nations in the activities of the Department of Public Information, ensuring that the texts of all new official documents in all six official languages are made available through the United Nations web site daily and are accessible to Member States without delay. Furthermore, the Department will continue to aim to eliminate the disparity between the use of English and the other five official languages in United Nations information materials.

Subprogramme 1
Strategic communication services

Delete expected accomplishment (c).

Add the following new expected accomplishments:

(c) Successful collaboration with client departments to develop communication strategies on priority issues

(d) A strengthened culture of communication and coordination among United Nations system partners

(e) Increased awareness of key thematic issues among audiences through the implementation of communication strategies on those issues

(f) Continued regionalization of United Nations information centres

Delete indicators of achievement (c) (i) and (ii).

Add the following new indicators of achievement:

(c) An increase in the percentage of client departments that indicate satisfactory collaboration

(d) An increase in the number of joint and/or coordinated activities with United Nations Communications Group member organizations

(e) An increase in the percentage of audiences indicating increased awareness

(f) An increase in the number of regions undergoing the regionalization process

Paragraph 23.6

Replace the words "information centres and services" with the words "information centres, information components and regional information centres and services".

Paragraph 23.7

At the end of the first sentence, add the words "information components, and regional information centres and services".

Paragraph 23.8

In the first sentence, replace the words "in local languages, by United Nations information centres and services", with the words "in local languages, where possible, by United Nations information centres and regional information centres and services".

At the end of the paragraph, add the words "and regional information centres".

Paragraph 23.9

Replace the words "the information component of United Nations peace missions" with the words "the information component of peacekeeping operations and of political and peace missions of the United Nations".

Subprogramme 2
News services

In the objective of the Organization, after the words "media outlets"[2], add the words "the general public".

Add the following new expected accomplishment:

(c) Satisfaction with the availability of timely, accurate, objective and balanced information and/or services to the media, delegations, other audiences and redisseminators

Add the following new indicator of achievement and renumber the existing indicator of achievement (a) (ii) accordingly as (a) (iii):

(a) (ii) An increase in the number of radio programmes disseminated directly to broadcast stations, by language and by region

Add the following new indicator of achievement:

(c) An increase in the percentage of users expressing satisfaction with the availability of timely, accurate, objective and balanced information and/or services

Paragraph 23.10

Replace the words "information centres and information services" with the words "information centres, information components, and regional information centres and information services".

Subprogramme 3
Library services

In the objective of the Organization, after the words "the Secretariat" add the words "the general public".

At the beginning of indicator of achievement (a) (ii), add the words "An increase in".

At the beginning of indicator of achievement (b), add the words "An increase in".

In indicator of achievement (b), replace the words "coordinated projects" with the words "completed coordinated projects".

Paragraph 23.14

At the end of the paragraph, add the words "through its leadership of the Steering Committee for the Modernization and Integrated Management of United Nations Libraries".

Paragraph 23.15

In the first sentence, replace the words "the print collections of United Nations documents" with the words "the need for printed copies of United Nations documents and the".

Paragraph 23.18

In the first sentence, replace the words "engaging in collaborative projects" with the words "coordinating collaborative projects".

Subprogramme 4
Outreach services

At the end of indicator of achievement (b) (iii), add the words "sorted by official languages".

Paragraph 23.21

In the final sentence, replace the words "target audiences" with the words "the general public and redisseminators".

Conclusions and recommendations

7. **The Committee recommended that the General Assembly allocate programme 23, Public information, of the proposed strategic framework for the period 2006-2007 to the Fourth Committee (Special Political and Decolonization Committee) for its review and action and for subsequent submission to the Fifth Committee for its consideration in the context of the overall strategic framework for the period 2006-2007 under the item entitled "Programme planning".**